

Cuba an 'Irritant'**Fulbright Calls Europe No. 1 Issue**

By Robert R. Brunn

Staff Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

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Sen. J. W. Fulbright (D) of Arkansas peers directly at you and says, "This sniping from the Republicans could pressure the President to do something that wasn't wise.

"I'm afraid of this. We had Cuba once and didn't know what to do with it. We can't go back to imperialistic talk. We stopped that 30 years ago. . . . Let's live with this cocklebur. It's no real trouble now. We can always act if necessary."

The influential chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, one of the most respected Democratic spokesmen in Washington, insists that the "real problem" the United States faces is in Europe, that Cuba is an "irritation." He reminds the interviewer that Europe "is the core of global power" and the de Gaulle anti-American offensive has brought a critical condition.

In his view, "Cuba diverts us from Europe." He says he gets many letters from people who have been confused by the GOP attacks on the administration's Cuba policy.

Surprise Over de Gaulle Admitted

As for "the de Gaulle bomb," he admits the United States was surprised. "The American mistake was believing that de Gaulle thinks as we do."

"Still," he says, "the game may not yet be over with France. Probably it is, but there are forces at work on President de Gaulle. The Germans will be very cautious in the next few months."

Asked about the French-German treaty, he says, "It's fine for the Germans to want to bury the hatchet with the French, sure. But let's not see our policy totally upset. We've spent too much time and money and anguish on it."

Like many American spokesmen before him in the past few weeks, he shows some exasperation that Europeans would believe the United States wants to dominate Europe.

"We really want to treat them as equals. That's the goal. But France isn't equal in terms of power. That's different."

Returning to Cuba, he observes: "The Republicans just aren't looking at the Cuban condition in perspective. Here in the Senate we have a rule that no members' motives will ever be questioned. Let's apply this to our foreign policy, too."



Sen. J. W. Fulbright

How Many U.S. Troops in Cuba?

"We have Guantánamo [naval base on Cuba], don't we?" Referring to the Soviet troops he asked: "How many American troops are there in Cuba?"

But Europe is where the Senator is really "at home." When asked: "Apart from France, the rest of the alliance is restive, isn't it?" he replies:

"We're in a transition. We got a bit self-satisfied. These Common Market countries are getting rich and sassy. But this is only an irritation, they aren't going off the deep end." [He refers to the "friendly five."]

He says the United States "lagged" in not giving more responsibility to the allies for nuclear weapons. Now, late, the administration's multilateral nuclear force is being shaped up.

"We were preparing for this, but the Common Market moved ahead of schedule. Maybe we didn't move fast enough. But General Norstad talked about this force publicly almost three years ago."

Senator Fulbright says Europe has been dependent and the United States shouldn't be surprised if there is now a reaction. The rejection of the British at Brussels precipitated action in Washington on more nuclear-power sharing.

Senator Fulbright still hopes for Great Britain's Common Market entry and a more influential British role in Western Europe. He puts it this way:

"Through the years they've shown a balance and a political responsibility. Their political acumen is essential to bring balance, continuity, and to avoid extremes. Europe must avoid antidemocratic tendencies that might appear."